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ABSTRACT

As one of the final papers of the National Study of American Indian Education, this report is a description of the Makah Indian community and school at Neah Bay, Washington. Included in the community description are current population factors, historical background, and economic factors. The educational portion of the document gives historical background, physical plant information, administrative and financial factors, teacher data, curriculum factors, and information on school and community attitudes. Two maps show the location of the school and the community. (LS)

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FINAL REPORT

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Community Background Reports

Series I

No. 13

Neah Bay: The Makah

John Connelly
Ray Barnhardt
San Francisco State College
January, 1970

RC004541

NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

The attached paper is one of a number which make up the Final Report of the National Study of American Indian Education.

This Study was conducted in 1968-69-70 with the aid of a grant from the United States Office of Education, OEC-0-8-080147-2805.

The Final Report consists of five Series of Papers:

I. Community Backgrounds of Education in the Communities Which Have Been Studied.

II. The Education of Indians in Urban Centers.

III. Assorted Papers on Indian Education--mainly technical papers of a research nature.

IV. The Education of American Indians--Substantive Papers.

V. A Survey of the Education of American Indians

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PREFACE

During the late fall and early winter of 1968, a field team from the San Francisco State College conducted research in the Neah Bay community under the auspices of the National Study of American Indian Education.

The field team consisted of John Connelly, Ray and Carol Barnhardt, and Charles McEvers.

Interview schedules and questionnaires prepared by the NSAIE were used in the study. Interviews of students, parents, teachers, and administrators were carried out by the field team members. Draw-A-Man tests were given first grade and fifth grade students. Results of these studies will be included in NSAIE reports. This is a description of the Neah Bay Community and Schools.

The field team wishes to express its thanks to all the school personnel and members of the Neah Bay Community for their graciousness and cooperation.

John Connelly
Ray Barnhardt
January, 1970

NEAH BAY

Location and Climate

The Makah Reservation, on which the village of Neah Bay is located, is part of the Olympic Peninsula, Washington. This is an area covered by forest or logged-off land, and logging is a major industry. Neah Bay itself has an excellent harbor used by commercial fishing fleets about six months of the year. Beachcombers, hikers, and tourists are attracted to the scenic beaches of the area and sport fishing, primarily for salmon, also attracts visitors.

The Makah Reservation at the northwestern corner of the Peninsula extends about six miles south along the Pacific Ocean and six miles east along the shore of the Straits of Juan de Fuca. The reservation area consists of slightly under 43 square miles (27,035 acres).

In common with the Northwest Coast, the climate is moderated by the offshore Japanese Current. Extremes of heat and cold do not occur. There is heavy rainfall in the area, producing the characteristic thick forests of conifers including spruces, Douglas fir, cedars, yew. Small rivers and streams abound.

Population

There are over 650 full-time residents living in Neah Bay and about 400 more who live within 5 miles. Most of the village residents are Makah Indian, and 70 percent of the children attending the Neah Bay school are of Indian or part Indian ancestry. The remainder are the children of local white residents. An Air Force Radar Station located in the area accounts for most of the 400 persons living within 5 miles of Neah Bay. Children of families stationed here are bused to the Neah Bay school.

Historical Background

As in many another Indian group, the contemporary community of Neah Bay had its origins in a native community into which or adjacent to which agencies of the United States government, and in this case the Bureau of Indian Affairs established a base of operations. In a minimal sense this enterprise consisted of an agency office, quickly followed by a school and sometimes by a medical person and housing for this agency personnel. The Makah Treaty with the United States Government of 1855 included the provision that the Makah ". . .were to be given an Indian agent to supervise their interests, tools, and equipment for use in cultivating their land, and teachers and

artisans to train them in civilized pursuits."[1]

The Makah Agency was established in 1863, eight years after the signing of the Treaty. Cape Flattery, at the very tip of the Olympic Peninsula, and the immediately off-shore islands were reserved for the U. S. War Department. A few miles south and east of this small military reservation at Cape Flattery the Makah Reservation was founded.

A unique aspect of Makah-BIA relationships resulted from topographical circumstances. The Makah were water-oriented people in residence along the shores and primarily dependent upon the sea for livelihood. The forested interior was of minimal concern. For the seventy-year period under BIA, agents approached Neah Bay by water. The present road to the village was not built until the late 1930s and after acceptance of tribal government provided by the Wheeler-Howard Act (Indian Reorganization Act of 1934). For, whatever the parochial views, policies, and practices of the BIA, the forest provided a buffer against an intruding, competitive impact of outsiders. As the in-situ representatives of the outside, the agency personnel were, to a large extent, isolated.

The impracticality of the agents' intent to make agriculturalists out of the sea-going Makah made such efforts an engagement in futility. This was even more so because the soil and topography of the reservation were not fertile enough to warrant extensive cultivation. Farming was the agents' criteria of "civilization" but the policy of a remote federal government to impose a life based on agricultural pursuits on the Makah were charged with frustrations in an unamenable environment. In addition, federal agents seem to have attempted to eliminate those aspects of Makah life which were conspicuously Indian--among them dances, dress, the Potlatch ceremony, family life, curing, eating habits. However, Makah access to an outer world, Indian and other, by sea appears to have given them a sophisticated manner of resisting the parochialism of the agents. Colson provides an illustrative example.

> "The Makah did not tamely accept the numerous attacks upon their own customs. They showed considerable ingenuity in adapting their customs to suit the agent's whims while still retaining the essential elements. After potlatches were forbidden, one member of the tribe who had some acquaintance with European customs succeeded in giving a potlatch with the agent's approval by quietly waiting until Christmas time, when he put up a spruce tree, hung his goods upon this and then gave them away as Christmas presents with the blessings of the agent and the missionary. For some years after this the Makah spent much of

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[1]Treaty with the Makah, 1855, Indian Affairs Laws and Treaties, compiled and edited by Chas. J. Koppler, Washington, D. C: Government Printing Office, 1904, Vol. II, p. 682.

> the profits from their various enterprises in seeing who could give the biggest Christmas parties. Later, they adopted birthday parties with equal enthusiasm."[1]

These and other ploys, however, had less to do with the changing life of the Makah than with demonstrating resistance to subjugation and to a unidimensial determination of change. Economically, the Makah had not become a dependent people. They were not dependent upon the agency for subsidies, for knowledge or skills in maintaining themselves. They had a richer source of contact diversity, a broader range from which to select with a minimum of arbitrary imposition, and a higher degree of economic resources from their own sea-going enterprises than could be offered or imposed from the narrow range resources of the agents. This sense of independence retained through the seventy year period of agency control appears to have served the Makah well in coping with contemporary affairs.

Economy

Today, fish processing, fishing, logging leases, and tribal, state, and federal employment provide most of Makah cash income. Although the considerable change which has come to the Makah is evident in the organization and operation of the tribal government, the Community Action Program, and tribal enterprises, the sense of self-worth, or perhaps even more Makah-worth, is not diminished.

A rather high degree of sophistication is apparent in perceptions and comprehensions of complex business and legal involvements. Examples are found in the negotiations by the tribe to obtain the lands of the Ozette Reservation on the Olympic Peninsula and their participation in the Cape Flattery Company, a fish meal processing firm. The Makah tribe owns twenty five percent of the company and is responsible for its operation. Fish meal, a high protein powder made from whole fish, is used to fortify livestock and poultry feed. By addition of one more processing step the fish meal can be converted into food-grade Fish Protein Concentrate, a high protein additive that can be used to enrich the nutrition-poor diets of millions of people. Thus the Makah demonstrate a capacity to be participants in undertakings that involve complex scientific, technological, economic, and business considerations.

The construction of a road along the coast of the Straits in the late 1930s opened the community to tourists and sportsmen and the economic developments of this industry. Logging operations are carried on under leases granted by the tribal council. While logging, fishing, business, and tribal, state and federal government agencies do provide employment opportunities, these are insufficient to meet all the employment needs. Individuals and families do go outside for employment for varying lengths of time.

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[1] Elizabeth Colson, The Makah Indians, a Study of an American Indian Tribe in Modern American Society, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1953, pp. 17-18, and Manchester University Press, England.

Social Conditions

Community activities center around churches (Presbyterian, Shaker, Apostolic), the local movie house, high school athletic contests and the community hall. Community dinners are well-attended and may be sponsored by individuals, organizations or the tribal council.

Housing in the community is sparse and the tribal council is attempting to develop plans for a housing project.

EDUCATION

Historical Background

In the area of schools and schooling the Makah fared less well than with BIA agents and personnel. Freedom available to sea-going sailors and fishermen and the confidence derived from a relatively secure economic independence were not experiences and opportunities available to children at home in the villages. They were under the surveillance of agents and agency personnel who, thwarted in acting upon their commitment to convert "heathen" and "barbaric" fishermen into "civilized" farmers, turned their attention and energy upon the children. The initial endeavor was with a day school which was unrewarding for the school. The continuing exposure of the children to the native family and community influences distracted from and minimized the effects of the school's determination to de-Indianize the children. It was thus decided that a boarding school was necessary and a boarding school located about a mile from the nearest village was opened in 1874. Colson cites the statement of the founder of the school as recorded in the Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1874. He said it was his policy to take Makah children:

> ". . .entirely out of barbarous surroundings and put them in the midst of a civilized Christian home. It will be my endeavor to reject from my own mind and from their minds the notion that the clay of which Indians are made is of a coarser grit than the clay of which other people are made, and act upon the hypothesis that they have souls and bodies just like other people, and the same precious interests for time and eternity. I shall insist, first of all upon cleanliness of person: shall clothe them as comfortably as I clothe my own children; shall give them good clean beds to sleep in: shall seat them at the same table with my own family, kneel them at the same altar, and require of them the same good behavior. In connection with all this I shall make it my first endeavor to teach them to speak the English language, not by the slow process of letters and books, but by the usage of common parlance. The Indian tongue must be put to silence and nothing but English allowed in all social intercourse. Meanwhile, habits of industry must be cultivated. The girls must be practised in all

> domestic duty, in cooking, sweeping, scrubbing, sewing, and knitting, and the boys must be practised in gardening and all kinds of useful work. Suitable amusements must be devised for them, more attractive than any they have ever known before, and such as will tend to good morals, health, and happiness."[1]

The boarding school continued until 1895 when a return to a local day school was made. School policy and practice was consistent however, never diminishing its emphasis upon alienating the Indian child from Indian influences of home and community. Children completing the work of the local school were urged to continue their schooling at the Indian boarding schools at Cushman in Tacoma or Chemawa at Salem, Oregon.

The over-riding notion was that the parents and local adults were unqualified to make educational decisions for their children. School and schooling were new involvements for the Makah and unlike the economic circumstances had no reference base in the traditional lifeway. Changes occurring in the economic circumstances were developmental in character and resulted from meaningful encounters affording a range of options. The school situation did not provide either a pertinent point of reference or possibility of choice. Perhaps most emphatically, the school was identified as an area certain to impose the notion of incompetence and inadequacy of the child, his family and the Makah people. Residual effects of this attitude appear even today (1968-69).

The present school at Neah Bay is one of two K-12 schools in the Cape Flattery School District. The other is located at Clallam Bay, about twenty miles east. The schools are about the same size, each having under three hundred students. The elementary (K-6) enrollment at Neah Bay is slightly higher than at Clallam Bay, and the high school enrollment about two-thirds of that at Clallam Bay. The student population at Neah Bay is about seventy percent Indian. Most of the non-Indian students are bused from the nearby Air Force and Coast Guard reservations.

Physical Plant

The elementary, high school, and teacher housing are all contained within a fenced-in compound. The elementary school began with a small building in 1932 and has had several additions, the latest a first grade room built in 1953. The school contains shop, music, science rooms, classrooms, a gymnasium built in 1938, a teachers' room, kitchen and offices.

The high school building is more modern. The first unit was completed in 1957 and a second unit was completed in 1967. The total cost for the school was $340,000. There are 4 classrooms: Commercial and Home Economics rooms, a library,

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[1] Ibid., p. 9.

kitchen, storage room, an office compound, conference room, toilet and locker areas.

Enrollment at Neah Bay has risen 27 percent in the last 10 years and the School District anticipates that more classrooms will be needed if the primary grades continue to hold their size. In addition, it is felt that a new gymnasium with standard sized basketball court and seating facilities is needed. More shop and storage space is also desired.

Twelve teacher housing units complete the school compound.

Administration and Finance

The Cape Flattery District, in which the Neah Bay K-12 school is located, is a public, consolidated school district governed by an elected school board. At the time of our visit (1969) there was a 5 member school board consisting of 1 Indian and 1 white from Neah Bay, and 3 members from Clallam Bay.

The district receives financing from state and local funds, Johnson O'Malley funds and Public Laws 874 and 815.

The Board hires the superintendent of the district and the school principal.

There are 13 grades at the Neah Bay School and the high school level is fully accredited.

Teachers

The K-6 grades include 11 teachers and one secretary. Eight teachers are assigned to grades 7-12, teaching in both the junior and high school classes.

Teacher salaries range from $6400 a year to $10,100 for those with a Master's degree and 45 hours above.

Teacher turnover is high. Several factors account for this. Among them are the absence of medical facilities, isolation, an absence of accustomed social and cultural activities, and expensive living conditions. Twelve teacher housing units are located on the Neah Bay School Campus, ranging from single units to 3-bedroom units and are rented to teachers. Trailer and tourist facilities are also available to teachers. Much of this housing is not satisfactory to those who would like to spend many years teaching in Neah Bay. However, teachers, coming from off the reservation, are unable to own property here, and thus cannot build their own homes.

Teachers are given no special preparation for working with Makah Indian children either in their pre-service education or prior to coming to Neah Bay.

The rapid turnover precludes intensive familiarity with the community. Many teachers are attracted by the outdoor activities of the area and recruiting efforts stress the availability of outdoor hobbies.

Curriculum

The curriculum of the school is standard State of Washington curriculum. As noted above, the high school grades both at Neah Bay and Clallam Bay are fully accredited.

The children all use the English language and there is some comprehension of Makah but limited use of that language in the community.

School and Community

The principal of the Neah Bay School referred to the fenced-in school compound as the "small island of the State of Washington in the sea of federal reservations." A link chain fence surrounds the school grounds upon which the elementary school, high school and teacher housing are located. Although the fencing of the school campus area was reportedly for the purpose of keeping stray horses out, several teachers remarked about how the horses managed to get through more easily than the local people. Comments of local residents tended to support in various ways the view that the school was a thing apart from the community and operative on its own terms without community involvement.

Some speakers attributed the deficit in school-community relations to the school board which had three representatives from the off-reservation Clallam Bay area and only two from Neah Bay. Others seemed to feel the location of the superintendent's office at Clallam Bay was a factor. Still others felt the alienation of school and community derived from the attitude of the local principal and members of the teaching staff. Whatever the explanation, the sense of separation was strong.

Concurrently there was expressed a feeling of inadequacy about relating to the school, and the expectation that efforts to do so would result in belittlement. Parents and other adults interviewed would make favorable mention of individual teachers, but mention with a sense of hurt that there had been a community dinner given to welcome new teachers but minimal reciprocity of feeling by school staff. While there are observed specific acts and situations that show alienating aspects of the relationship, there are also some which support affinity in the relationship.

The stronger impression is that there resides in the community a submerged fear of the school--a mistrust of its attitude toward the people of the community. The rather heavy annual turn-over of teachers tends to obscure school perception of the historical factors effecting the contemporary situation. There was a sense of puzzlement and concern among the Makah about the aloofness of the school. This was the more striking as one observed the confident manner and the capability of community individuals in speaking in public meeting, discussing tribal and business affairs and in interacting with non-Indians on a variety of matters.

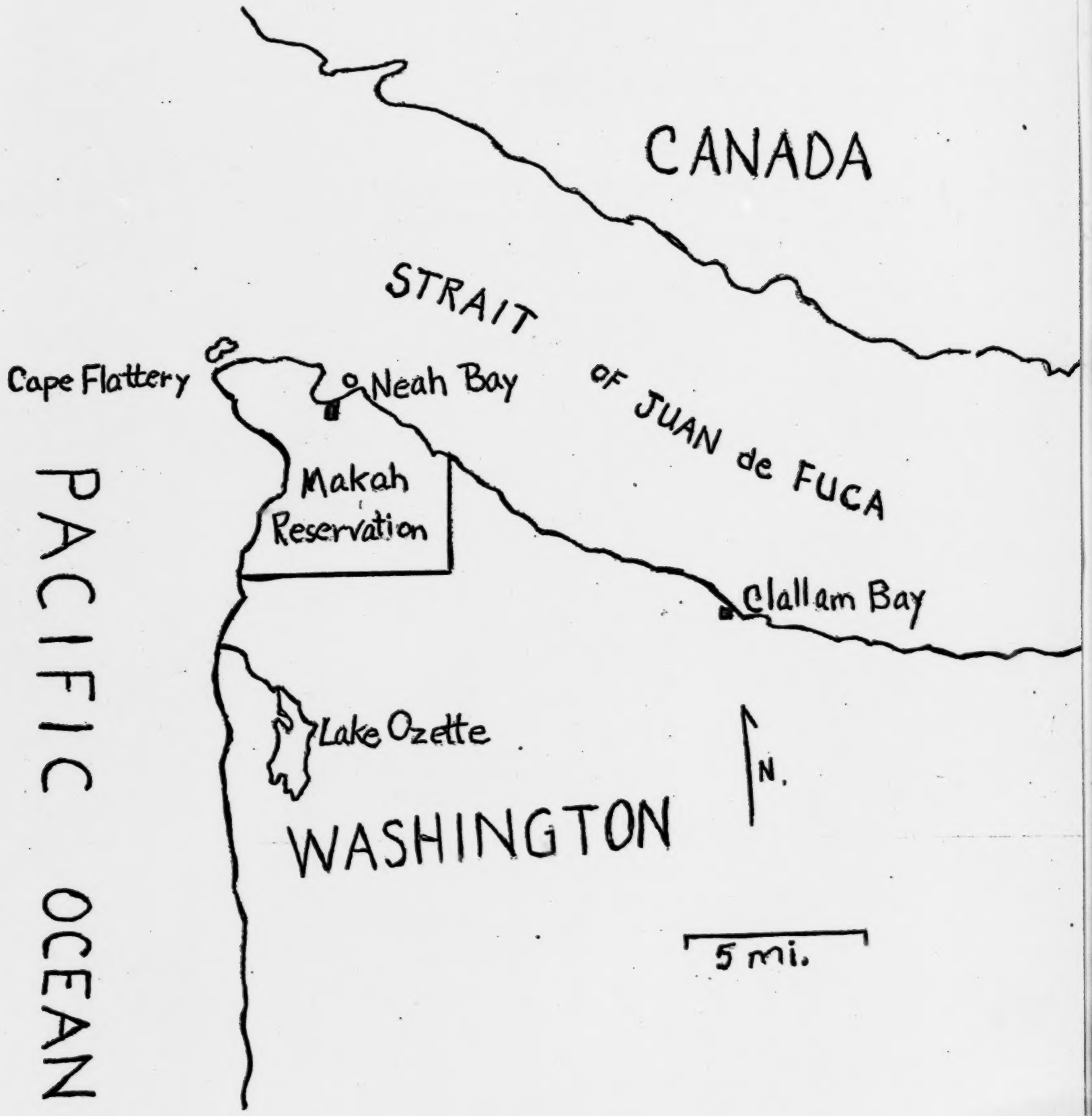
The cautious guardedness about interacting with the school was the more pronounced because of the competency of interaction in other areas.

Problems and Trends

In general the prospects for development in Neah Bay are quite good. They do emphasize the need for trained people and there is increasing awareness and concern about education and schooling. There remains, however, a real need for assessing the effects of historical experiences and their bearing upon current attitudes and concerns, in the school-community relationship. The importance of the school in the development of potentials for the community will require the school to modify its semi-autonomous view of itself and its operations.

Proposals have been made, under the urging of the State of Washington Department of Education, for merging the two small high schools in a single facility about halfway between the two towns of Neah Bay and Clallam Bay. This would require bus transportation for all students. Parents and tribal officials at Neah Bay do not favor the merger, believing that busing would provoke an increase in drop-outs. Another concern is that Indian students in a one-school arrangement would be in a minority position and thus more easily discouraged. There is, in addition, a financial consideration. The Cape Flattery School District receives about $48,000 per year from the State of Washington because the Neah Bay and Clallam Bay schools have been judged to be remote and necessary. Were the schools to be merged, only about $13,000 would be received for the "remote and necessary factor." Although there are obvious disadvantages in small high schools, in this particular situation at this particular time, it may be that in efforts to maintain their own school in Neah Bay, the people will acquire a greater sense of affinity with the school.

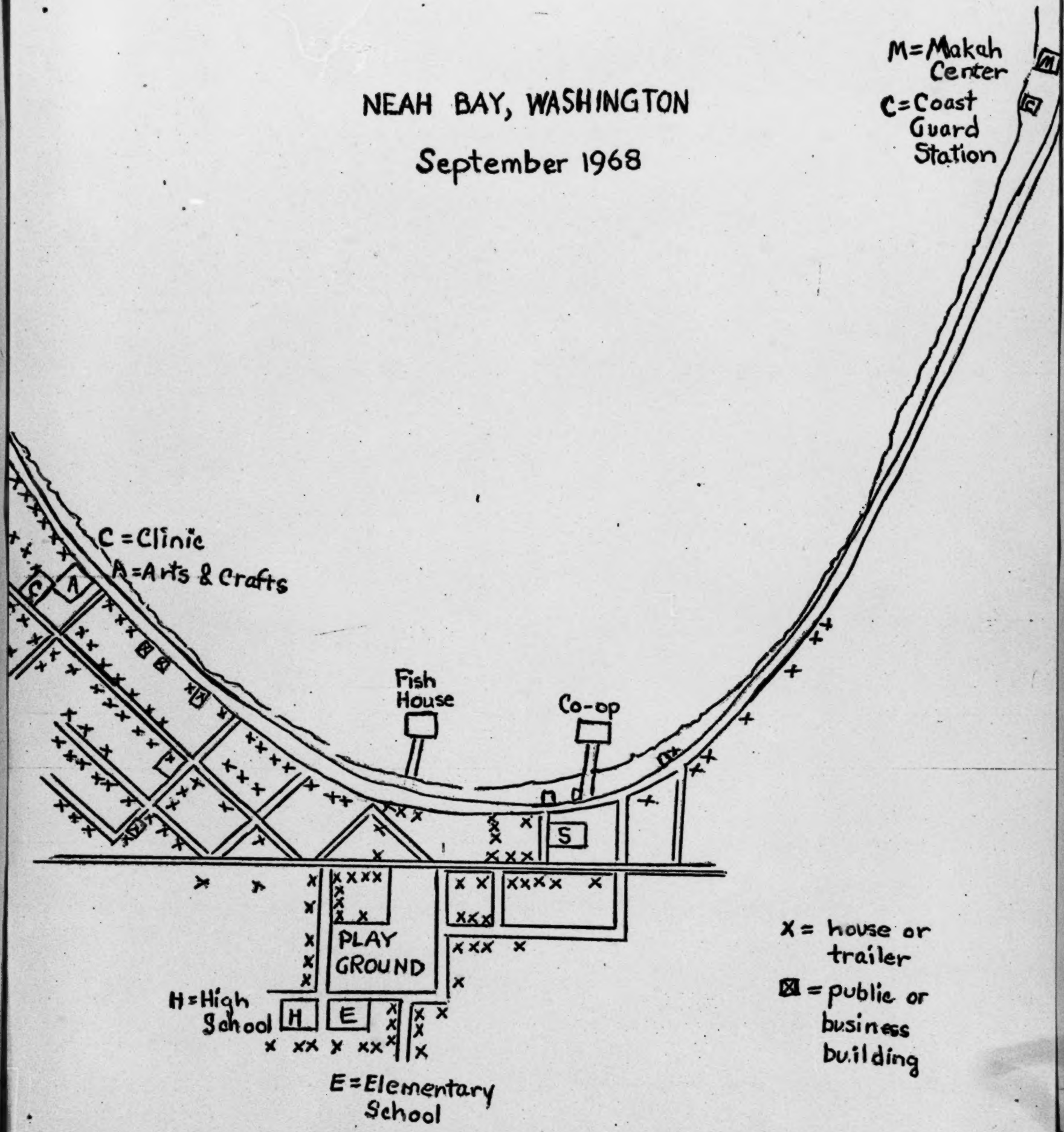
MAKAH RESERVATION



Map 1.

NEAH BAY, WASHINGTON

September 1968



Map 2.